

Message Text

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SUBJ: BACKGROUND OF CURRENT JAPANESE DEFENSE DEBATE

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SUMMARY: JDA DIRGEN HAS RECENTLY MADE SERIES OF DECLARATIONS IN DIET WHICH AT TIMES SEEMED TO ADVOCATE A MORE POSITIVE NEW APPROACH IN USG-GOJ DEFENSE COOPERATION. DECLARATIONS HAVE GENERATED WIDE COMMENT IN POLITICAL AND MEDIA CIRCLES AND IN DIET. RESULTING QTE DEBATE UNQTE HAS BEEN OFTEN CONFUSED, CONTRADICTORY EXERCISE WHICH SEEMS TO HAVE PRODUCED AMBIGUOUS RESULTS. WE BELIEVE SAKATA'S EFFORTS TO BE ATTEMPT TO STIMULATE AWARENESS IN PUBLIC AND HIGHER GOJ POLITICAL LEVELS TO TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS ALREADY INITIATED IN BUREAUCRACY RATHER

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THAN ATTEMPT TO TAKE BOLD, INNOVATIVE STEPS TOWARD NEW US-JAPAN

SECURITY RELATIONSHIP. FOLLOWING IS ANALYSIS OF BACKGROUND AND STATUS OF JAPAN'S DEFENSE DEBATE. END SUMMARY.

1. ARRIVAL OF MIKI ADMINISTRATION TO POWER AND ADVENT OF MICHITA SAKATA TO JDA DIRGEN'S CHAIR BROUGHT NEW TEAM WITH NEW PERSPECTIVE INTO POSTS HOLDING PRIMARY POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR JAPANESE SECURITY AFFAIRS. PM MIKI HAD BEEN A WELL-KNOWN LDP QTE DOVE UNQTE, AND SAKATA WAS PREVIOUSLY A COMPLETE UNKNOWN IN THE SECURITY FIELD BUT HAD BEEN AN ENERGETIC, FORCEFUL MINISTER OF EDUCATION. BOTH MIKI AND SAKATA SEEM TO HAVE BEEN DISTRESSED WITH THE GULF BETWEEN THE REALITIES OF JAPAN'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. AND THE JAPANESE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION AND UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY PROBLEMS. SAKATA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MOST SPECIFICALLY BOTHERED BY THE DISCOVERY OF TECHNICAL-LEVEL QTE STAFF STUDIES UNQTE BETWEEN THE U.S. MILITARY AND THE JSDF CONCERNING ASPECTS OF SECURITY TREATY IMPLEMENTATION. THE APPARENT ASSESSMENT WAS THAT IF THE EXTENT OF SUCH STUDIES WERE TO BE SUDDENTLY DISCLOSED AND COME UNDER OPPOSITION POLITICAL SCRUTINY, THEY HELD THE POTENTIAL FOR BECOMING A SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM, POSSIBLY APPROACHING THE MAGNITUDE OF THE NUCLEAR ISSUE THEN RAGING. AT THE VERY LEAST, THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW AND PAINFUL POLITICAL ISSUE AROUND US-JAPANESE SECURITY PLANNING COULD HAVE, EARLIER THIS SPRING, FURTHER COMPLICATED NPT RATIFICATION, A MAJOR ELEMENT IN THE PROGRAM THE MIKI ADMINISTRATION WAS ATTEMPTING TO PUSH THROUGH THE DIET. IN ADDITION, SAKATA MUST HAVE CONCLUDED THAT US-JAPAN DEFENSE CONTINGENCY DISCUSSIONS COULD NOT PROCEED MEANINGFULLY UNTIL PUBLIC AWARENESS AND POLITICAL DISCUSSION HAD PROVIDED THE LARGER FRAMEWORK OF SANCTION AND GUIDANCE. HENCE, SAKATA'S ANNOUNCEMENTS EARLY IN HIS TENURE AT JDA OF HIS INTENTION TO SET UP A DEFENSE ADVISORY GROUP TO ADVISE HIM ON HOW TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SECURITY PROBLEMS AND OF HIS FURTHER INTENTION TO QTE ENHANCE CIVILIAN CONTROL UNQTE OVER THE JSDF.

2. IN COINCIDENCE OF COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN INDOCHINA WITH THE MIKI ADMINISTRATION'S ALL-OUT EFFORT TO SECURE DIET RATIFICATION OF THE NPT PROVIDED SAKATA WITH AN OPPORTUNITY OF WHICH HE SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN SKILLFUL ADVANTAGE. SOME CONSERVATIVES BEGAN OPENLY TO CAST ANXIOUS GLANCES TOWARD THE CREDIBILITY OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA AND TO INITIATE AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGN FOR UNSECRET

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EQUIVOCAL REITERATION OF THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO BOTH JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA. SAKATA SEIZED THIS TIME TO BROACH PUBLICLY THE QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF DISCUSSING MORE CONCRETE DEFENSE SHARING ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE U.S. UNDER THE MST AND TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT JAPAN'S DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS IN GENERAL. SEVERAL YEARS AGO SUCH SUGGESTIONS WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN AUTOMATIC AND PROBABLY SUCCESSFUL CRIES FOR SAKATA'S IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION. IN THE SOMEWHAT ALTERED POST-INDOCHINA ENVIRONMENT THE

LEFT HAS SURPRISINGLY CONFINED ITS COUNTERATTACK TO TECHNICAL ARGUMENTS DESIGNED TO CIRCUMSCRIBE ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS; AND MEDIA REACTION HAS BEEN REMARKABLY MUTED.

3. LETIST COUNTER-ARGUMENTS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO LINK SAKATA'S PROPOSALS WITH EFFORTS TO STEP UP JAPANESE REARMAMENT, EMBROIL THE JSDF IN U.S. MILITARY MISADVENTURES IN KOREA OR JOINT OPERATIONS, STICK THE GOJ WITH AN EXPENSIVE DEFENSE COST-SHARING AGREEMENT, AND JETTISON JAPAN'S THREE NON-NUCLEAR PRINCIPLES BY INTEGRATING JSDF OPERATIONS INTO THOSE OF U.S. NUCLEAR-EQUIPPED FORCES. MIKI AND SAKATA HAVE COUNTERED THE OPPOSITION BY REAFFIRMING AND EVEN STRENGTHENING THE GOJ COMMITMENT TO TRADITIONAL RESTRAINTS ON DEFENSE POLICY. IN THE PROCESS, THEY HAVE STATED THAT:

A. JAPAN'S DEFENSE BUDGET WILL NOT EXCEED ONE PERCENT OF GNP.

B. THE THREE NON-NUCLEAR PRINCIPLES ARE THE PARAMOUNT NATIONAL POLICY OF JAPAN; ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER THE SECURITY TREATY AND OTHER ACTIONS MUST BE SUBORDINATED TO THEM.

C. BECAUSE OF JAPAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL PROHIBITION AGAINST THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE AS WELL AS FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN U.S. AND JAPANESE FORCES, THERE CAN BE NO U.S.-JAPAN QTE JOINT OPERATIONS UNQTE, ONLY QTE COORDINATED JOINT ACTIONS UNQTE.

D. THE GOJ IS NOT THINKING OF CONCLUDING AN AGREEMENT ON SHARING DEFENSE COSTS OR DEFENSE RESPONSIBILITY. (SAKATA EVENTUALLY EVEN BACKTRACKED FROM THE TERM QTE DEFENSE SHARING UNQTE TO QTE DEFENSE COOPERATION UNQTE AT DIRECTION OF THE PRIMIN).

E. JAPAN MAY NASER NO AS WELL AS YES TO A REQUEST BY THE U.S. TO USE BASES IN JAPAN TO SUPPORT ACTIONS TAKEN IN KOREA; THAT THE ANSWER WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER OR NOT JAPAN IS THREATENED BY THE SITUATION IN KOREA.

F. JAPAN MAY TAKE ACTIONS IN SELF-DEFENSE THAT EXTEND BEYOND THE BOUDNARIES OF ITS TERRITORIAL WATERS AND SKIES, BUT THAT
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SUCH ACTIONS WILL BE DEFENSIVE ONLY, AND ONLY IN ADJACENT WATERS. (AND NOT TAKEN QTE JOINTLY UNQTE WITH THE U.S.)

4. WHILE THE FOREGOING MAY SEEM LIKE A WHOLESALE RETREAT FROM THE SENSE OF SAKATA'S ORIVNAL PROPOSALS, WE DOUBT THAT HE EVER INTENDED TO INITIATE ANY IMMEDIATELY DRAMATIC CHANGES IN JAPANESE DEFENSE POLICY. WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK HIS OBJECTIVES ARE MORE LIMITED. THEY PROBABLY INCLUDE HIS DESIRE, REPORTED EARLIER, TO OBTAIN POLITICAL SANCTION FOR ONGOING QTE STAFF STUDIES UNQTE, THE NEED TO SHOW MOVEMENT TOWARD IMPROVED IMPLE-
MENTATION OF THE MST FOR THE BENEFIT OF LDP HAWKS IN CONNECTION WITH NPT AND FINALLY THE IDEA, SHARED BY MIKI, OF BUILDING TOWARD SOME TYPE OF EVENTUAL NATIONAL CONSENSUS ON SECURITY. PROGRESS WILL BE SLOW BUT, AS DEMONSTRATED IN RECENT WEEKS, JAPANESE PUBLIC AWARENESS ON THE SUBJECT OF DEFENSE HAS MADE

PERCEPTIBLE PROGRESS BUT WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF RESTRAINTS ARTICULATED MORE CLEARLY THAN EVER BEFORE.
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